

Taking advantage of people

[Religion](#), [Islam](#)



Throughout history, religions have been created and still today continue to be created. Most people have a common faith that they have inherited from their ancestors; they have and always will practice their religion as long as it seems to be in their favor. Some people go to church to cleanse their conscious of the naughty things they've been doing and fear the wrath of their god. Others may have a lot of things going their way and they want to thank their faith in religion for these blessings.

Other people might be in a situation where life has handed them hardly a morsel of luck or faith; they may also blame a god for their misfortune or stop believing in religion altogether. These people would be in a prime condition to find faith. Finding faith is a reason why religious studies and practices are so intricately different. People take what they have been told and they mix these views with their own personal life experiences to create an ideal trust in someone or something. Sometimes people can believe in someone and take their words as the words of god.

To do this they have to trust and hold such a person in the highest respect. In return the person who is in supposed contact with God must value this trust and use it to spread their beliefs. This relationship usually works out quite nicely for the people in such a bond. They find a trust in each other and each gain the ability to use one another. In the 1930's a relationship like this spawned in Detroit, Michigan. Wallace Fard, the leader of a new pseudo-Islamic religion, became acquainted with Robert Poole, a southern migrant with an already growing discontent of self status.

Robert Poole saw a rope of faith hanging from Wallace Fard. He became his best friend and in time Fard taught Poole every detail of his Nation of Islam. Fard even declared himself Allah, or God, and disappeared, leaving Robert Poole with a new name and title that would make him the leader of the religious group. Poole's new name became Elijah Muhammad, meaning the prophet messenger of Allah. He took the role as leader of what was left of the Nation of Islam and moved the headquarters to Chicago, IL. In Chicago, Muhammad set up Temple No. 2, igniting a spark of religious flame that continues to burn today.

The Nation of Islam possesses characteristics like all other religions, holding the faith and continuing to gain support from both old and new Black Muslims (Encyclopedia of African American Culture). Just like every other religion, the Nation of Islam has doctrines. These doctrines were set down and enforced by Muhammad. A great portion of the Doctrines were copied directly from Orthodox Muslim tradition. Practices such as eating only one meal a day, praying five times a day to their sole god Allah, and reading their holy Koran daily are all a part of the Nation of Islam's rituals.

To add to this strict regiment, it was also necessary to separate one's need for cosmetics, drugs, alcohol, and any other vices created by the white man. This scorn for the white man or "white devil" as Muhammad would have referred to them, is a profound emotion underlying the basics of his religion. It would be wise to note how much hate is tied to the Nation of Islam. This hate can be used as an avenue of gathering. It gives a nucleus of discussion and reflection that its members can all relate to. The members are found to

be highly racist: they believe in a total separatism of all other cultures, specifically Caucasians.

Only black men and women are welcomed. The current leader Louis Farrakhan follows Muhammad's teachings to the word. He believes that Elijah Muhammad was the prophet of Allah and that all of his teachings were the words of Allah (Esquire). Elijah Muhammad held a tight grasp on his followers. He saw that no one in his organization was socially outcast. In fact, the practitioners of his faith were all law-abiding citizens that rid themselves of all debt. This quality was a genuine blessing in the eyes of most African Americans in the late 1900's.

It is highly respectable to not owe money to anyone; it shows a sign of competence in a person's ability to provide for their family. The ability of Elijah Muhammad to reform broken men and women was an attractive power to a culture in America that had been waiting for an avenue out of the lives they were already stuck in. The separatist attitude of the Nation of Islam is a direct repercussion from the views of racist white supremacy groups. After admitting to yourself that this nation was founded on the ideas of rich white slave holders, you can understand the demeanor that these Black Muslims carry towards the white ace. Instead of fighting the discrimination they were receiving by pacifistic ways they chose instead to fight the social structure head on. Just like the racist groups that were making African Americans' lives so hard, they too sought segregation. This belief comes from the stories of human history that Muhammad fed his followers. The story tells that in the beginning Allah created the black human race. This "superior" race of

humans held all the power and knowledge to rule the world. Somehow a mad black scientist created the white race, a cruel and deceiving race.

They then took the power from the black people by tricky and unjust ways. “ God gave the white race the right to rule for 6, 000 years. That rule is terminating...”(Muhammad, Elijah). Allah then granted them this power, allowing white men to rule the world for the next 6, 000 years. According to the Nation of Islam this power transfer happened about 6, 000 years ago. Now that the time had come for Allah to help the black race take back the power they deserved, Muhammad was preparing for war. This belief is where the Nation of Islam’s Muslims and the Orthodox Muslims differ.

It also seems to be a magnetic force that ties the followers together with dignity. It would be appealing to anyone to be a part of a master race of humans. It is the same technique that created so many Nazi party followers of Hitler. Muhammad is plainly creating the belief in a hierarchy of races where the black man is on top. This position as ruler is a justifiable desire, especially considering the state of African Americans in America’s social structure halfway through the century. It would be a Godsend to be moved through such ranks of power and it was this miraculous transition of power that appealed to the minority culture.

Elijah Muhammad created an avenue for African Americans to redeem themselves from the white prejudice by becoming a more respectable human. Besides Muhammad’s cries for black supremacy and a total separation from the United States, the man actually enhanced the quality of life of his followers (Newsweek). In 1940, Elijah Muhammad was arrested for

draft evasion. He ironically pled that his religion kept him from fighting the war. His time spent in jail turned out to be a pivotal point in his ability to hold a tight grip on the faith of his followers.

In jail he acquired a number of converts. In the 1940's prisons were full of convicts that were full of hate for the white man, who had imprisoned them under his white laws. It was simple for Muhammad to turn the anger of these convicts into hope. He filled the men in jail with a pride in their heritage and encouraged them to express their pride to the outside world. His most famous convert was a man named Malcolm X. Beyond Malcolm X there were many other convicts that became peaceful, law abiding citizens. Muhammad took junkies and healed them of their habit.

His words gave hope to a community that has been down-trodden since it arrived over 200 years ago. A driving will and determination flowed from him into the characteristics of other Black Muslims. The Black Muslims created an empire that Elijah Muhammad once controlled (Time). The Nation of Islam has grown proportionally well since its origin in the early twentieth century. Today it is led by a man named Louis Farrakhan. " When he called the African-American community to participate in a " Million Man March" on Washington, D. C. , 400, 000 responded—twice the number who walked with Martin Luther King Jr. in 1963.

Unlike Dr. King, everything Farrakhan said was dedicated to Allah. " (Staff) The numbers of members of the Nation of Islam has not declined, but it is not as powerful of a presence as it used to be when Muhammad was alive. Louis Farrakhan believes that Elijah Muhammad is alive and well on an alien

ship that he has said he has visited. It is often noted that the police were threatened by the quality of people that were Black Muslims. They said it made them feel uncomfortable because these citizens were all flawlessly law abiding. They held the highest moral standard and were presentable for any occasion.

This power to impress society with your presence was another drawing force for new recruits. It seems that most any person would want to feel valued and respected. The Nation of Islam was offering this in exchange for a complete conformity to their beliefs. The inner social structure of the Nation of Islam was very self aware and efficient. The members all shared a close family bond to one another. This feeling of belonging is a natural human desire. The men and women of the organization were all very welcoming toward any prospective member.

An alliance in a world that looks to be out to ruin you is a must. The Nation of Islam attracted idolized men such as Muhammad Ali, a world famous boxing champion. Having professional role models in your religion is a strong reinforcement that you have made the right decision. In life humans look to each other to figure out what they are doing. This ricochet of dependability is one reason why we have clubs and organizations. People get together and look for a common ground on which they can stand. Elijah Muhammad gave African Americans the common platform of racism to stand on.

It was easy for them to reach this common ground because this is the same platform that countless white Americans had been espousing from the moment the Africans arrived. Elijah Muhammad had reversed the effects of

racism to create a unifying force that struggling black men and women could reach for. He provided an opportunity to take a life that looked meekly respectable and turn it in to a self sufficient unit of hope. He turned prison convicts into upright citizens. Muhammad convinced drug addicts to give up their vices in the name of Allah.

He helped people get their finances back on track. In his struggle to create his dream of unified separate black nation, Muhammad had found a way to turn struggling bums into men. Although Elijah Muhammad is dead today, his legacy still continues to thrive under the leadership of Louis Farrakhan. It is not an Orthodox Muslim religion but it still values the cleanliness and self improving values of the Muslim faith. The Nation of Islam is actually a sharp mixture of all religions tied together, becoming separate from any of the religions it is based off of.

It is fresh starting ground for people who have been looking for a new faith that seems to be headed in their direction. Unlike Christianity, Buddhism, or Mohammedanism, Black Muslims have the belief that they are a special breed of human that is designed to rule the world one day. Once its members are convinced of this prophet it is easily understandable that they would aspire to belong to such an organization. It is empowering to be told that you are a part of the master race and that in a short time you will be in direct contact with your creator, who will show you the one avenue to providence personally.

No other mainstream religion preaches a life that is in any way superior to another man's, they all share a bond of unifying equality. It is easy to see

that the so-called equality that the African Americans have been experiencing is not quite equal at all. This gives rise to a desire to be on top, a desire conveniently supplied by Elijah Muhammad. When analyzing the history of religion it is acceptable to view them all as a righteous path to self-improvement. The Nation of Islam contained all the necessary functions to make its members stand out and shine in a society that had constantly dulled the significance of the African American.

Among many reasons, the Nation of Islam was a source of hope to struggling men and women with the desire to better their position in life. The Nation of Islam created a system that was bound to be self sufficient. " Islam holds that all humans are born with a predisposition to Islam; it is part of their innate nature. The human problem is thus the forgetting of one's inborn tendency to follow Allah". (Fisher, Paul) This unexplainable phenomena graced the Nation of Islam with a little bit of weight to throw around.

It also supplied a strong presence that still impacts the religious decisions of Americans today (Islam). The Nation of Islam was a power because of its numbers. It had the ability to draw crowds and keep them. Something in the message that Elijah Muhammad carried seemed to pull African Americans into his following. He had found what people wanted to hear. He used racism to strike an angry chord of passion in his fellow Black Muslims. This passion gave him the driving power to unify his people and start a religion that cannot be denied credit for its ability to improve life.

The basic tenants of this religion are transposable to a correct way of living. All aspects of their life seem to be in control, making it a model religion to

follow. It is this control that has made the Nation of Islam flourish. Elijah Muhammad controlled his followers and unified their cries for a better life. The control he kept was valued by onlookers hoping that they could have such control over their own lives. This undercurrent of faith, although marred by racism and separatism beliefs, is powerful enough to continue attracting numbers of followers in the hope to make their lives better.